

**Taking our burdens to Jesus with humility – 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A July 5th, 2020 (Zechariah 9:9-10, Romans 8:9,11-13, Matt. 11:25-30)**

In life if we have problems or something burdening us or bothering us, we immediately try to fix it. It takes humility to first put it in God's hand and then wait and see. We naturally tend to justify our mistakes rather than acknowledging them and apologise for them. It takes humility to accept help, corrections and criticisms from your spouse, your boss, your co-workers and friends. All these examples I have mentioned above tell us that there is a problem with Humility in almost every sphere of life. The proud person has an attitude of independence from God and nobody dares correct him for his mistakes. Worst of all, the proud person has no idea that he or she is proud. So, James 4:6 says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

The readings for today 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time show us that Jesus is our model of gentleness and humility and that God is on the side of the poor and humble person. In our first reading, the prophet Zechariah announces that the Messiah-King is a humble and poor person. The prophet foretells the humility of the Christ-King who was to come, which raised the hope of the people who had just return from exile in Babylon. He says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout...behold your King comes to you. Triumphant and victorious is he: humble and riding on a donkey." Jesus fulfilled this prophecy of Zechariah when he triumphantly entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey on Palm Sunday (Matthew 21:5).

In today's gospel from Matthew, Jesus rejoices because it is to the poor and humble that the Father has revealed his message of salvation. Jesus says that the mysteries of the Kingdom are revealed not to the learned and clever, but to mere

children who are symbols of humility. Jesus' message of salvation was rejected by the enlightened ones like the Scribes and Pharisees. But it was the poor, the gentiles, the unclean, the tax collectors and sinners who were more open to receive and understand his message. If we want to unlock the secrets of God's heart, we must not be proud hearted. If we want to serve God well, we must be humble and gentle of heart because God uses such people to achieve his way.

Jesus says in the 2nd part of the gospel, "Come to me all who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest." This invitation of Jesus is not to the proud because they do not realise that they are overburdened. This invitation is not to the clever because they hardly realise that they cannot fix it all by themselves. It is not for the self-righteous because they do not accept that they are overburdened by sins. It is an invitation to the simple, the humble and gentle of heart because they realise their need for God's intervention in their life. That is why Paul in the 2nd reading speaks of the Spirit who can only be received by the poor and those who are humble and gentle in heart.

Jesus finally asks us to take his yoke upon ourselves and learn from him because he is gentle and humble of heart. He says when we do this, we will find rest for our souls. At the time of Jesus, carpenters used to advertise that they made the best yoke for oxen. Jesus is the best carpenter who used to manufacture yoke and made it light and easy for the oxen to use for ploughing. Jesus does not promise that he will take the yoke away from us. He promises that he will make the yoke light and easy for us to bear as a good carpenter who produces light yoke for the oxen. Let us take all our burdens and yokes to Jesus in humility and we will surely find rest for our souls. **Amen.**

By Fr. Emmanuel Subaar